

COBBETT'S WEEKLY REGISTER.

VOL. 42.—No. 2.] LONDON, SATURDAY, APRIL 13, 1822. [Price 6d.]

Published every Saturday Morning, at Six o'Clock.

TO
ANY PLOUGHMAN.

*On the recent Report of the
Agricultural Committee.*

Kensington, 10 April 1822.

BROTHER CLODTHUMPER,

I AM about to address you on a subject in which you, as well as all the class of labourers, whether they work on earth or on brass or cotton, or whatever else it may be, are very deeply interested. There are on foot many schemes to raise the price of corn; and, one of them I am about to speak to you of. What are the objects of such schemes; whether such schemes ought to be thought of; and whether any such scheme can be effectual; these are matters that I shall consider by-and-by; but, first of all I must give you

the history of the origin of the schemes, and explain to you what this Agricultural Committee is.

You know but too well to what an enormous price corn and all sorts of food were raised during the war; you know that your wages did not rise with the rise in that price; you know, that, in 1792, the quartern loaf (in London) was $6\frac{1}{2}d.$, and that then you got on an average 9s. a week at the lowest; and you know very well, that, when the quartern loaf (in London) got up and kept up at 1s. to 2s. you did not get, as you ought to have done, 27s. a week; but were compelled to live (or rather starve) on from 10s. to 15s. a week. You saw the farmers and the landlords and the parsons prosper all this while; and well they might, for, amongst

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Printed and published by C. CLEMENT, No. 183, Fleet-street.
[Price Sixpence Halfpenny in the Country.]

them, and amongst those who were living on the taxes, there was a pretty fair division of what was withheld from you ; namely, about 18s. out of every 27s. that you would have had, had it not been for a paper-money system, by the means of which prices were raised, while the nominal value of the money caused your wages to continue so much lower than they ought to have been. The *prosperity* was a thing continually boasted of ; but *you* were not prosperous ! *You* did not taste of this “ prosperity.” *You* were suffering ; and the consequence of which suffering was, that a large part of the working people became *paupers*. It was a strange sight to behold, a Government boasting of the *prosperity of a country*, and the *number of paupers increasing* all the while ! I used to tell the Government this. I told it of it almost weekly for a great many years ; but, our Government is as strange a thing itself as there is to be found on the face of the earth.

This *prosperity* is a thing, however, that we ought clearly to understand ; because we shall presently have to speak of the “ *distress*,” which has been the cause of that *Report* on which I am about to address myself to you. If all the straw and hay and turnips and oats produced upon a farm were, when turned into dung, to be laid upon *one* of the fields out of the twenty, while the rest were ploughed and mowed and fed constantly without ever being dunged at all, that one field would look very *gay* ; it would be very *prosperous* ; but would it be a *prosperous farm* ? If one of the members of a family take not only his own income but two - thirds of that of ten brothers and sisters, he will make a *fine figure* ; he will *shine* ; he will be *prosperous* ; but will this be a *prosperous family* ? And would it not merit the epithet *prosperous* much more, if every member of the family kept his or her own income or earnings ? No doubt the *one* would make a *fine*

show; and as he would be the only one of the family that would be *seen*, the *family of Chopstick* would be thought *prosperous*, though nine-tenths of them might be paupers.

Thus was it with this nation, nine-tenths of whom were beggared by the very means that enabled the other tenth to make a grand and brilliant show. This *prosperity* was not, however, to go on without end. The paper-money, not payable in gold, was the cause of it. This it was that puffed up *prices* without puffing up *your wages*; and this it was, which, in this manner, took from the *labouring classes*, actually pinched from their backs and bellies and fires and beds all the means of carrying on the wars and of enriching farmers and landlords and parsons besides. The immense sums, thus pinched from the *millions*, and put into the hands of the *thousands*, made a *grand show*; and this show was called *prosperity*. This prosperity has now changed places with, or,

at least, is supplanted by "*distress*." The farmers and landlords and parsons are now in *distress*. Curious enough this too, that as soon as any of you get a little meat to eat; as soon as you begin to *live* a little; as soon as the Government has to announce (which it does) that the *poor-rates are decreasing*; it has to confess, though (it says) with great pain, that the farmers and landlords and parsons are in *distress*! Strange thing, my brother ploughmen, that their prosperity should have increased as poor-rates increased, and now decline as poor-rates decline!

That man must be an idiot, or a landlord, who wants any thing more to convince him, that the boasted prosperity was *false*; that it was merely the effect of a *transfer* of the wages and goods of the *millions* into the hands of the *thousands*; that, in short, all the fine show that has been made, has been merely the result of deductions from the wages of labour; and that not a single pennyworth

has, *upon the whole*, been added to the valuable things, or property, of the nation.

"Well," say you, as every man of plain sense will, at first thought, naturally say; "Well, but here is no cause of *distress*, Mr. Cobbett. The farmers, landlords and parsons will, indeed, *cease to deduct from our wages*; but, they will *still have their own*. We shall get the wages that we got in 1792, and they will get the prices and rents and tithes that they got then. We shall want no more poor-rates than we wanted in 1792: so that, we have only to forgive the past, and, please God, Mr. Cobbett, we shall all do very well again; and Old England will once more be the best country in the world."

COBBETT. Ah! master Clodthumper! But, it is very natural, that you should see the thing in this light. This is a curious sort of a **THING**, this thing of ours: it puzzles wiser men than you and I are.

CLODTHUMPER. But, surely, I must be right in this. Prices, as I can well remember; I mean prices of corn, are the same as they were in 1792; and, all there is to do is to give us the same wages as in 1792; and then are we not all right again *in a short time*?

COBBETT. Why now, do you get what you got in 1792?

CLODTHUMPER. Yes, I get more.

COBBETT. And are you *as well off* as you were in 1792?

CLODTHUMPER. No: but, then, *all prices are not yet come down*. There is my *salt* which is about *four times* as dear as in 1792; and my *shoes and breeches* and *leggings* and *hedging gloves*; and the *malt* is so dear that I cannot get any yet; and there are my tobacco and sugar and tea, all three times as dear. But, they will all come down, will they not?

COBBETT. I do not know that.

CLODTHUMPER. Oh! If they do not come down, and a great

many other things, I cannot live upon the wages of 1792; or, if I am compelled to take the wages of 1792, I must *still have part of my weekly pay from the Overseer.*

COBBETT. Thus, then, it depends, it seems, upon these same prices of other things *besides corn.*

And, do you not find, now, that *bread*, and even *flour*, are much *dearer* than in 1792, though corn is *no dearer* than in 1792?

CLODTHUMPER. Yes, I do; and that is a cursed shame. But, Mr. Cobbett, you know that millers and bakers are *great rogues!*

COBBETT. They must, then, be *fools* also; for, do you see many of them that get *rich*? Come, I see you puzzle yourself about this matter; and, if you will listen to me for a few minutes, I will explain to you how it is, that with the prices of 1792, you and the farmer and the landlord and the parson may all be in a state of distress *now*, though, in 1792, you were in *no distress at all*. You are not so well off as you were in 1792; the farmer is getting

poorer and poorer; the landlord gets little, and will shortly get no, rent; the parson sees his tithes in danger; and yet prices of farm-produce are much about what they were in 1792. Will you listen to me while I explain to you the reason of this?

CLODTHUMPER. To be sure I will.

COBBETT. You have said, that your salt, tea, sugar, tobacco, leather, soap, malt, and you might have added a great many other things, are *dearer* than they were in 1792. Now, all that the farmer and his family consume in this way is *dearer* also. All his implements are *dearer*. All that his tradesmen consume is *dearer*. So that the farmer has not so much left at the end of the year as he used to have. He pinches you as hard as he can, but if he do not give you enough to keep you in wages, he must give it you in poor-rates. He pinches himself and the tradesmen as hard as he can too; but, still he has to pay them a great deal more than

in 1792. Several farmers were, last year, asked by the Agricultural Committee, whether the *smiths* and *wheelwrights* and *collar-makers* had not reduced their prices. The answer was *very little*; not in proportion to the fall in the price of corn, *nor any thing like it*. And, why? Because these people found that salt, soap, candles, tobacco, leather, tea, sugar, malt, and other things *did not fall at all*, though corn did. Nay, they found that even *flour* did not fall to the price of 1792, nor any thing like it! And why not? Because the miller and millwright and all the miller's tradesmen found that their salt, malt and other things *did not fall at all*, though corn and cattle had fallen so much!

Now, then, why do not these, and numerous other things, fall as the corn and cattle fall? This is the point. They cannot fall, because there is a *tax* on them; and that tax *does not fall at all*. The barley is fallen to 2s. 6d. a bushel;

but, there was till the other day 3s. 6d. a bushel tax on the malt; and there is now 2s. 6d. tax on the bushel of malt; which, together with excise-expenses and risks, makes up about three-fifths of the whole cost of the malt. Then the salt is, in fact, *all tax* except about a *shilling a bushel*; and, it is now *twenty* shillings a bushel, and was in the year 1792 only about five shillings a bushel. In short, the farmer has now to pay, through the various channels, about *four times* as much in taxes as he had to pay in 1792; and, if his *prices* be the same that they were in 1792, it is clear, that he must pay rent out of *something else than his produce*; for, if he can now pay rent out of his produce, the farmer of 1792 must have been getting rich as a Jew; and we all know that he was not.

The fact is, that great numbers of the farmers grew rich *during high prices*; that is to say, as I have shown before, by deducting from the wages of labour and by making the labourers paupers.

But, these riches soon melt away; and, as a great part of them are already melted, the farmers cannot, in numerous cases, pay any rents at all. This is a pretty smart pull up for the landlord. He, therefore, now feels what is called "*distress*." You felt it before; but you went quietly to the *poor-house*; and, if the landlord would go *quietly*, we should hear of no such *schemes* as I am about to address you on; but, the landlord will not go quietly to the *poor-house*: he makes a "*clamour*;" calls aloud for a "*remedy*;" and the *Report*, about which I am going to write to you, contains one of the many *remedies* that have been proposed for purposes of giving him *relief*.

It is curious enough to observe, that when the farmer paid high rent very punctually, and when the deduction from your wages was reducing you to misery the most deplorable, the landlords never thought of any schemes to afford *relief to you*! This is very well worth carrying along in your

mind. You know very well, that, since 1792, three-fourths of you have actually *become paupers*; and yet, the nation was said to be, all the while, *increasing in prosperity*! But now, the moment the Landlords begin to feel, though the *millions* are better off, those landlords set up the cry of "*national distress*"! This is well worthy of being borne in mind; though the case is full, from one end to the other, of curious matter.

However, let us now proceed towards the *remedy* contained in the *Report*, first describing a little this thing called the *Agricultural Report*. You should know, then, that a great number of farmers and landlords have sent petitions to the House of Commons, complaining of their *distress*, and praying for *relief*. The House has, in consequence of these prayers, picked out a portion of the wisest of its Members, and called them a Committee, and ordered them to inquire into these complaints, and to *report to the House* the result of their inqui-

ries; that is to say, to lay before it a paper, containing the opinions of these picked members as to the nature and extent of the evil, and as to the remedy, if any, which they think ought to be applied. This paper is called the *Report*, and the Committee, in this report, have suggested certain *remedies*, of which I propose to speak to you pretty fully.

You will, doubtless, conclude, at once, that the tendency of the remedy will have a *correspondence* with the cause of the distress. Having seen so clearly, that the farmer is disabled to pay rent by the taxes; having seen that, with prices of 1792 and with taxes four times as great as those of 1792, it is impossible for him to pay the rent of 1792; having, in your own case, experienced, that, with *corn* at the price of 1792, you would actually starve to death with the wages of 1792 if unaided by poor-rates; having seen, in short, that it is *the taxes* that disable the farmer to pay his rent, and that is now *taking down* the landlords

into a state that their honours and lordships are pleased to call "*distress*;" having seen this, you will, I dare say, have already concluded, that the Committee, in a case so very plain, have, at once, *recommended the reducing of taxes to the standard of 1792*.

Alas! Brother Clodthumper, little do you know of the wisdom of the nation in its "*Collective*" state! Oh, no! Not a word about reducing taxes: not so much as a single word, or the ten-millionth part of a single hint, as to any such matter. Quite enough, however, about another mode of giving *relief*; namely, by *raising the price of corn*! Now, here we have another curious thing. During the twenty years, or thereabouts, that *you* were suffering from high prices and low wages; during the time that *you* were in a state of half starvation from that cause, we never heard of any schemes for *raising your wages by law*! We heard of schemes, and we saw the laws passed, to prevent you from *combining*, to *punish*

you for combining, to raise, or even to *keep up*, your wages; we saw laws to *compel* you to make disclosures as to combinations of this sort in which you yourself might have been implicated; but, during, the whole of the twenty years, while your wages were kept down in comparison with the prices of provisions, we never heard of such a thing as any one's thinking, or dreaming, of *a law to raise the price of your labour!* This is something quite *neat*: it has in it no sort of mixture.

But, in the total absence of all thoughts of this kind, there were thoughts enough of another kind respecting you. Pinched so hard by high prices of food and by low wages, you necessarily became what they still called *paupers*, though the character of pauper was merely one in which you received a part of your wages. Hence arose numerous schemes for *docking* you in this quarter; and amongst other schemers, one parson MALTHUS came forth with a proposition to *check the breed-*

ing of labourers! He did not propose a law to *raise the price* of labour. That was not amongst his remedies. Your labour had fallen in price through the means of a base paper-money. No proposition to get rid of this base money. No proposition to raise the price of your commodity, your labour; but, now that the landlords complain of distress, there are propositions enough to *raise the price of the produce of the land!*

Keeping this in our minds, let us approach the scheme for *raising the price of corn*. And here, let me beseech you to bear in mind, that this same parliament has passed laws; or, at least, keeps in force laws, to *prevent corn from rising in price!* "Good God!" You exclaim; "can this be *true?*" Indeed it is. There are laws in full force, that make it *impossible*, that the Winchester bushel of wheat should, on an average of seasons, fetch more than about four or five shillings English money; and, in my opi-

nion, it is by no means improbable, that the price may, on an average, come down below four shillings. This will depend, in some measure, on what foreign nations shall do as to their money-affairs; but, according to present appearances, it is possible, and even probable, that the price may come down to *three shillings*. I have seen no statement; I have heard no argument, to show why it may not, while I can see many reasons on the other side. However, the laws now in force absolutely forbid the expectation, in the mind of any sane person, of a higher price, on an average of seasons, than the *present price*. And yet, the scheme of the Committee is to *raise the price* by *another law*! I beg you to bear this in mind, and not to disbelieve it, or to doubt of it, because it appears to you, and to common sense, so utterly strange and monstrous; for, you will observe, that what, as applied to other times and other persons, would appear absolutely against nature, is na-

tural enough, and, at any rate, strictly true, when applied to these times and these persons.

The scheme for raising the price of corn is as follows. The Committee *assume* that there is "*a glut*" of the market. That *over-quantity of corn* is the cause of the distress. *Why* they assume this, they do not say; but they assume it; and, having assumed it they proceed as follows to state their *remedy for the glut*; though I must here, again, before I quote the Report, state, that there is no reason given by the Committee, and that there is no reason existing, *why* corn should be at a higher price now than it was in the year 1792; and, as to a glut, as to over-production, how monstrous is the idea, when it is notorious that the last crop was *smaller* than the crop before the last, and when it is equally notorious that the price has become much lower *since* that smaller crop was gathered. In the teeth, however, of these notorious facts, this Committee

propose a remedy for a glut. Having observed, that to export must be impossible, they proceed thus.—

“Two other modes have therefore
“been under the consideration
“of your Committee; by the first
“of which it was proposed, that
“one million of *Exchequer Bills*
“should be applied to purchasing,
“through the agency of Govern-
“ment, and laying up in store, a
“certain portion of wheat grown
“in the United Kingdom; and
“by the second, that facility and
“encouragement should be offered
“to individuals to deposit a part
“of their stock in warehouses, so
“that they might not be forced to
“come into the market simul-
“taneously, and under the disad-
“vantage of excessive competi-
“tion, but might be enabled to
“wait until the supply, having
“approached nearer to the wants
“of the consumers, might afford,
“if not a remunerating, at least a
“price somewhat less ruinous for
“their produce.—With regard to
“the first of these proposals, the
“general objections against mak-
“ing the public, through the
“Executive Government, a dealer
“and speculator in corn, the sus-
“picions to which it might give
“rise, and the uneasiness in the

“public feeling, which it might
“eventually excite, the danger of
“its being drawn into precedent,
“the claims which it might be
“supposed to give to other im-
“portant articles of domestic pro-
“duce, whenever they might be
“exposed to similar depression,
“and the universal rule of allow-
“ing all articles, as much as pos-
“sible, to find their own natural
“level, by leaving the supply to
“adjust itself to the demand, dis-
“courage your Committee from
“recommending it, even under
“this extraordinary emergency,
“and with all the guards and
“qualifications of a temporary
“expedient. But with regard to
“the second, although much less
“efficacious in its operation, the
“objection of Government be-
“coming a purchaser does not
“apply, as individuals would in
“this case act for themselves, and
“according to their own discre-
“tion, the Government interfering
“no otherwise than by making
“advances upon the commodity
“deposited, which would be re-
“paid, with a low rate of interest,
“as soon as the article should be
“brought to market.—For effect-
“ing this object, two different
“modes have been suggested; by
“one of which it was proposed,
“that when the weekly average

" price is under 58s. (the import
 " scale remaining as at present)
 " wheat should be stored, subject
 " to a monthly allowance of 6d.
 " per quarter, *until the average*
 " *price should reach 65s.*—The
 " whole quantity not to exceed
 " 600,000 quarters, and the time
 " for which the allowance should
 " be payable not to exceed *twelve*
 " *or eighteen months.*—Not more
 " than a certain number of quar-
 " ters, nor less than another spe-
 " cified number of quarters, to be
 " stored on the part of *any indi-*
 " *vidual or firm.*—The owner of
 " the corn, so deposited, to be at
 " liberty to withdraw it at any
 " time, waving his claim to al-
 " lowance, or refunding it.—The
 " other proposition was, That for
 " the purpose of relieving the glut
 " which at present presses upon
 " the grain-market, the Govern-
 " ment, whenever the average
 " price of wheat shall *be under*
 " *60s.* should *grant advances of*
 " *money* upon such corn of the
 " growth of the United Kingdom,
 " as should be deposited in fit and
 " proper warehouses upon the
 " River Thames, and in the ports
 " to be hereafter specified to an
 " extent not exceeding *two-thirds*
 " *of the market value* of such
 " corn; the quality of the corn
 " and the fitness of the ware-

" houses, to be *approved of by*
 " *officers to be appointed by the*
 " *government.*—The loan to be at
 " the rate of *three per cent.* and
 " the period of deposit not to ex-
 " ceed twelve months.—The corn
 " to be withdrawn at the will of
 " the depositor, upon payment of
 " the interest, *warehouse-rent,*
 " and *other charges.*—The sum
 " of *one million so applied,* would
 " probably be fully adequate to
 " give a *temporary check* to the
 " excess which is continually
 " poured into the already over-
 " stocked market.—If the House
 " should be inclined to agree with
 " your Committee in countenanc-
 " ing the latter of these proposi-
 " tions, it is evident that it ought
 " to lead to *some immediate pro-*
 " *ceeding*; and although no very
 " great effect can be contem-
 " plated from adopting it, its ope-
 " ration, as far as it may extend,
 " can hardly fail to afford *some*
 " *temporary relief.*"

This, as was before observed,
 is a scheme for *raising the price*
of Corn. I shall say nothing
 about the morality, the humanity,
 or the justice, of the scheme. I
 shall consider it as a scheme to
 answer a *certain end*; and in-
 quire, whether it be calculated to
 answer that end. The end is, *to*

enable farmers to pay rents. The present price is called "*ruinous*," and the scheme is intended to obtain for the farmer a price "somewhat *less* ruinous." I should like to know upon what ground it is assumed, that the present is *too low* a price. As compared with *rents*, *tithes* and *taxes* the price may be *too low*; but, as compared with labour, with wearing apparel, and with other commodities, exclusive of tax, it is *not too low*. The price is now as high as the manufacturer and labourer and artisan can afford to pay. This is what the Committee appear never to have thought of. They have only looked at the defalcations in the *rent-roll*, not recollecting, that it is in consequence of the prices, which produce those defalcations, and *only* in consequence of those prices, that the manufacturers, and hundreds of thousands not coming strictly under that denomination, are enabled to exist. The Committee forget, that, if food were now, with gold in circulation, at a price to enable the farmers to pay the same nominal sums out of the produce that they paid some years back, *starvation* or *convulsion* must be the instant consequence. The Committee seem to have nothing but rents

to compare prices with. Let them compare the price of corn with the price of labour, or the price of any *untaxed* thing if they can find such a thing. Let them compare the price of corn with the price of *raw cotton*; or, indeed, let them compare prices of food here with those of food in *France*; and, then, I fancy they will find them *high enough*; and that, if they be *ruinously low*, it is only in comparison with *rents*, *tithes* and *taxes*.

But, let us look at the scheme a little in detail, and, first, at the first *mode*. A man is to bring a parcel of wheat and it is to be put into a store, provided by the Ministry or persons appointed by them; it is to be locked up; the market price must be under 58s. a quarter when it is put in, and it may, at the pleasure of the owner, remain for twelve or eighteen months. He is to receive an advance upon it from the Government to the amount of 6d. a quarter a month. When he takes out his corn he is to repay the advances that he may have received on it. Thus, then, if I have a lot of corn I may pawn it, and get an advance upon it, and thus keep it back from market for eighteen months. The pawning of corn, and for a Government to

be pawnbroker, are things wholly new; but, who did not expect to see even stranger things than this before the breaking up of this monster-creating system!

It does not seem to have occurred to the Committee, that a man might pawn corn not worth more, perhaps, than 30s. a quarter (and a great deal is not worth that sum) and, by keeping it in pawn eighteen months, clear twenty per cent. by the pawning. He might take his wheat out of pawn at the end of eighteen months; and then *put it in again*, unless the law were repealed. From the quantity required to obtain a pawn, it is clear that the great *corn-dealers* would have the whole of the thing in their own hands; and it would be hard indeed if they could not keep the profits to themselves. What is intended is a benefit to the landlords; use of the public money to them for nothing. A gift, a grant, a present *to them*; but, if it go through the hands of *Corn-dealers* (who are in great part *Quakers*) the landlords must, after all, scramble hard, fight tooth and nail, to get even a taste of the precious donation.

The other of this pair of schemes is a pawn for a sum to be received *at once* from the Government to the amount of *two-thirds* of the

market worth of the corn, and this *worth* is to be *settled by officers appointed by the Government!* Gracious God! Here will be pretty goings on! It is useless to attempt to describe the effect of such a scheme; but, it must be precisely what every one like its inventor must want. The *Government* appoint the persons to *value* the corn and *apportion the pawn on it!* Well, after that, is it of any use to offer a comment upon this scheme? It is a deep scheme indeed; and such an one as we have so often seen from the man to whom this scheme is ascribed. Oh! there is nothing like your "*independent country-gentleman*" for the most precious of schemes!

As to the terms of *taking corn out* of warehouse under a law like this, the Parliament need not, I think, trouble themselves about *that!* To *keep* it out will be the difficulty; for, I'll engage it will come tumbling in, at the *valuation* of the "*officers appointed by the Government!*" There can be no obligation to take it out. The nation may *keep the pledge*; and a famous pledge it will be. The pawners will be all "*loyal*" men, I dare say; for, radicals and jacobins will never have the impudence to face "*officers appointed by the Government!*" If this

scheme go into effect, a *prettier* thing never was played off: no, not even during the disputes about the *union with Ireland*. I think it is likely to be the last grand trick from the budget of the system. There will be enough and enough to get a little *slice of the million!*

The Committee, in their eagerness to check the glut, seem to have overlooked the possibility, not to say probability, of corn being *cheaper* at the end of twelve or eighteen months than it is now! If the next harvest should be a fine one, wheat may be four shillings a bushel, though the 600,000 be locked up. Besides, will it not be *known to be locked up?* Aye, and known, too, that it must come out again into the market. In fact, unless *destroyed*, it must come out *first or last*. In the course of two years it must make its appearance in the market. And, as it must come first or last, must not its effect, first or last, be the same upon prices? *There it is*, ready to come out, and nothing but destruction can prevent it from producing its full effect. *To a people* it may sometimes be of use, in countries of great casualty, for the Government to hold corn in pawn, or to purchase it up; but to *the growers* of corn, and

especially in a country like this, it is impossible that such a measure can be productive of good. It is mere delusion; and delusion, too, capable of imposing upon none but very weak persons.

Three per cent. interest is to be paid on the pawn. Now, what is this; what can it be called but a loan of a million at 3 per cent. to corn-dealers in order to induce them to buy up corn, that the price may be raised and that the farmers may be induced to try another year and give up more of their capitals in rent to the landlords? What can it be called but this? The farmers are ready to *start*; and this may retain them, till their last shilling be gone! It is impossible, that any rational man can entertain the hope of the measure producing the smallest ultimate benefit to *the farmer*. It may induce him to keep on a little longer; and that little longer must be his ruin. If, indeed, Peel's Bill were to be repealed in 18 months' time; or if it could be reasonably expected, that any thing to lower the value of the currency would take place, there might be something to say for such a measure; but, the *contrary* of this must be expected. The value of the currency has not yet reached its height; and, if a man

have debt to pay with the amount of corn, the sooner he pays it the better.

To what a disgraceful state is the system arrived, when such schemes can be entertained! What must the landlords think of themselves, when they contemplate this as a means of affording them *relief*? But, to this and to much worse, much more low and ridiculous, shall we see the thing fall. The scheme of advancing *four millions* is abandoned; but, to something like that we shall return, *unless taxes be reduced*. Farmers will quit in spite of all that can be done; or they will be ruined. Landlords will be unable to continue the cultivation of the land themselves. Yet the land *must be cultivated* and the people fed. The *government* must see to this. It must *lay hold* as owner or trustee. In what *way*, under what *name*, or *colour*, no one can tell; but, if the present taxes be *enforced*, this, or something very much like it, must be, and will be, the result. How long the thing may stop at that stage no man can say; but, that that will not be the *last stage* we may be perfectly satisfied. We are now, at this moment, in a *revolution* of property, quietly going on. A *more radical* revolution than that of France; and this

is seen clearly by all, except those who are most deeply interested in the consequences of the revolution.

The remainder of the Report, as it does not propose any thing *now to be done* in the way of affording what the Committee call relief, is not a thing to occupy much of our time; but, there are certain parts of it not altogether unworthy of notice. It is proposed to allow those who hold *foreign corn* to take it out of warehouse and to *grind it*. For *what*? To be sold and eaten here to be sure; for, as for doing this "for the purpose of *exportation*," where is the spot of earth in this whole world, to which it could be sent at any thing like so cheap a rate as the people there can get flour manufactured elsewhere? Did it ever yet happen, that wheat was imported and manufactured here, and exported in flour, the trade of the world being *free* at the same time? Never. Why, then, are we to believe that this is the intention now? There can be no doubt at all, that the foreign corn holders would like this; for they know very well the impossibility to prevent them from selling the flour in this country, if they be once permitted to grind the wheat here. And what is to become of

the *offal*? Is that to be *exported* too? Or is it to be flung into the rivers and ditches and ponds?

This whole quantity of foreign corn, however, about which the Committee make such a to do, and, in their circulating-library style, talk of its "*hanging over*" the market, ready to *pour in* at "once;" of its being made "to *feed* the market rather than *inundate* it;" the whole quantity, thus made to *hang* and to *pour*, to *feed* and to *inundate*; the whole quantity thus spoken of in language like that of a girl in her teens writing a letter to her dearest friend at another boarding-school; the whole quantity that hangs like a craggy rock and pours like a stream in one sentence, and that feeds like your plough-boy with the hay under his arm, and comes rolling over like a flood, in another sentence; this whole quantity, which you, brother Clodthumper, would have said, ought to be made to *feed* rather than *cram* the market; this whole quantity, about which there is such a terrible piece of work, is only about enough for *thirteen days' consumption*! This is a pretty cause to produce such important and lasting effects.

The Committee, no less than three times, make use of these

words, or words to this effect:—

"that foreign corn is *raised at less expense than in this country.*"

Do you know, brother Clodthumper, what the Committee may mean by this? I do not, I confess.

If a farmer pay his man a penny a-day in France, and if a penny will buy as much food in France as half-a-crown will in England, the corn is raised, as far as labour goes, *as cheap* in England as in France, though the English Farmer pay half-a-crown a-day to his labourer. The Committee view the thing in the wrong light; or rather, they *blink* the main thing altogether. Corn is every where raised at the same *positive expense*, with the difference in soil and climate. It is the relative expense; and that depends upon the taxation altogether. I should like to know, however, what are the notions of the writer of this Report upon this subject; who the writer is, I cannot tell; but *his* notions upon a matter like this, must, I am sure, be something *very entertaining*.

In one part of the Report, the growers of British corn are encouraged to rely on an *interested combination* of the importers of foreign corn in their favour. The Report observes that the interest of these proprietors of foreign

corn, will, by letting them sell in our market when wheat gets up to seventy shillings a quarter, be brought strictly into unison with the interest of the British corn grower, and into *direct hostility* to that of all other importers of foreign corn; so that every endeavour will be resorted to, on their part to *advance* the price to seventy shillings, that they may *liberate* their own stock, but to keep it below eighty shillings, that they may *exclude all foreign competitors*." There only wanted the word *enemies* instead of *competitors* to make this a perfectly military sentence from the beginning to the end. I should tell you, brother Clodthumper, that this is House of Commons writing. It is like no other writing in this world. None that ever was and none that ever will be.

But, as to the matter, it is curious enough, that, while we have, in this part of the Report, such a clever contrivance for squeezing advantage out of the greediness and villany of combined Corn-dealers, we have, directly afterwards, a contrivance equally clever, for the purpose "*of preventing the effects of combination.*" There occur only two clear sentences between the hopes held

out as likely to arise from a combination of Corn-dealers for raising and depressing prices, and the advantages likely to be derived from "*preventing the effects of combination and speculation*" in those very Corn-dealers!

There is one passage more in the Report which I think it necessary to notice. The words are these, "nor must it be lost sight of, that *owing to the great alteration in our currency*, eighty shillings may and do now represent a different and *considerably higher value*, than in 1815, *as measured by the price of all articles of consumption.*"

This is a very curious admission. It has been contended by this description of politicians, and by the ministry especially, that the currency has been raised in value only in the proportion of *four and a half per cent.* But here we have a *great alteration*; here we have a *considerably higher value*; and here we have, *slipped out*, as it were by mere accident, what no one has ever seen before except in my Register, namely, that we are to measure the value of the currency, not by the price of Gold, but by the "*price of all articles of consumption.*" This has slipped out for the first time, in this place; and if the Report had

contained nothing but this one sentence, it would have been good for something, and bad for nothing.

Few as the words are here, they are of great importance. The Committee was selected by the Ministers, and this one sentence of the report totally removes the foundation, upon which they erected the Bill of Mr. Peel. This has been the great question at issue, between the ministry, the parliament, the Scotch Reviewers, and all the Scotch writers and all the English writers that write about such matters, on the one side, and *me*, your brother Clodthumper, on the other side. They have always contended; this host of dunderheads (I do not mean to include the Parliament, when I talk of dunderheads), this whole host have contended, that the price of gold, as compared with that of paper-money, was the measure or standard of value; that it was by that that we were to know in what degree our currency had risen in value; that it was by that that we were to know the extent of the alteration in the currency. I contended that that was no standard at all; that it could be no standard; that it really had nothing to do with the matter into which we were inquir-

ing; and that the true measure was, the general average price of articles of consumption, and that, if we had a mind to select any one of which, the best was, the average price of the bushel of wheat.

Now, whether the Committee have deliberately, or accidentally, recognised this doctrine of mine as the true doctrine, I cannot say; but, certain it is, that they have here recognised that doctrine most fully; and they have made the recognition, too, in the most ample manner; because they have introduced it as forming part of the basis of a proposed law; and of a law, too, affecting very important interests. Whether they perceived it or not, I am not certain; but here is the axe laid to the very root of the very best argument brought forward by the prime minister, and by his colleague in the other house, in order to prove that the taxes were not the cause of the distress. Their argument was this. In 1813 agriculture was in a state of prosperity. The value of money at that time was a fourth lower than it now is. Since that time a fourth part of the nominal amount of the taxes has been taken off. The taxes, therefore, are now, *no heavier than* they were in that *time of prosperity*; and, *therefore*, it cannot

be the taxes that now cause the distress!

This is conclusive; this is wholly unanswerable, if you admit that the money is now *only a fourth* higher in value than it was in 1813. This has been admitted by every one but myself; and this has been the strong ground of the ministers, and the Scotch Reviewers. Place them upon this ground, and they will beat you for ever upon the question of taxes. However, in this Report, they seem to have abandoned the ground themselves; for, as I observed before, here they have recognised my doctrine; and I only wish I could hope that the rest of the Report would warrant the opinion that this recognition is the forerunner of the return of long absent common sense.

When, however, I look at this Report as a whole; when I consider it as something intended to point out a remedy for those evils which press upon the country; when I consider it as a thing intended to stem the torrent of that revolution in property which is taking place; and especially, when I see it containing not one single word upon the subject of those taxes which are sternly, though quietly, ejecting the farmer, disinheriting the Landlord, and

sending the labourer prowling about for food; when I view it in this light; when I find in it for this mass of evils, nothing but a poor miserable scheme for taking corn into pawn; when I see this, I should be weak indeed to place even the smallest degree of reliance upon any thing to be done by an assembly in which such a Report could be received without every mark of contempt; and that it will be received with any mark of contempt, at all, is a great deal more than I expect from that assembly.

I have now done with this Report; but there are some matters very closely connected with it, to which I have now to call your attention; and, if you do attend to what I am going to say, you will understand much more about the cause of the *distress*, as it is called, than this Committee appear to understand.

In London, at this time, the quartern loaf, weighing four pounds and five ounces, is sold for $9\frac{1}{2}d$. At Paris, the police has just ordered the price of bread of four pounds to be sold for as much French money as makes $5d$. of English money. The French pound, is, I believe, two ounces heavier than ours. Thus, then, the bread in London, is nearly as

dear again as the bread at Paris; and all the world knows that the French bread is the finest of the two. How comes this difference?

The wheat in France is no very great deal cheaper than it is in England at this moment; but, the taxes paid by the miller, by the baker, and by all the people that they employ, makes such an addition to the price of the bread in England, that the people in London are compelled to pay so much more for it per pound than they pay at Paris. Here we have the true reason, why people go to spend their English money in France. There are said to be nearly two hundred thousand English persons living in France. Take these at twenty pounds a year a-piece; and here are two millions of money a-year, spent in France, which, were it not for our enormous taxes would be spent in England. So that one evil creates another; and the evils, at last, combine and form a burden that is intolerable. A great part of the English persons in France, live upon the taxes raised in England. Perhaps one-fourth part of them; so that here is money, actually taken away from the Landlords, Farmers and Tradesmen and Labourers and Artisans in England, and carried

and given to the subjects of our old enemies the Bourbons to make their people well off and themselves powerful.

But, now let me beg your attention to a comparison, as to the price of bread, at two different periods, in this our own country; and what I am going to say now, I beg you will never forget; but that you will read it over and over again, till you remember every word of it as well as you remember the Belief or the Lord's Prayer. I will put it in a separate paragraph, in order that you may, if necessary, cut it out of my little book and stick it up over your mantlepiece.

The two periods to which I have alluded are 1792 and 1822. Now mind, the average price of wheat in 1792 was 42s. 4d. the quarter. And the price of the quartern loaf in London was then 6½d. Now mind again, the average price of wheat in this year, 1822, is 45s. 11d. a quarter; and the price of the quartern loaf in London is 9½d. Thus, you see, that, though there is very little difference in the price of the *wheat* in the two years, there is almost *one-third* difference in the price of the bread! This seems a wonderful thing. And how is it to be accounted for? Do bakers grow

rich? Are they not, on the contrary, the poorest of all tradesmen? No: but, when you consider that the corn-dealer, the miller, the flour-merchant, the lightermen, the carters, the bakers, and all the people that all of them have to employ, pay *four times* as much in taxes, as they paid in the year 1792, your wonder ceases that the quartern loaf costs nearly a third more than it cost in the year 1792, though the sum of money which the farmer gets for his quarter of wheat is but very little more now than it was then.

In perfect accordance with this, is the result of the inquiries of a gentleman in Suffolk, a Mr. ROUSE, who has lately published an Essay, in which he has shown, that farmers were formerly allowed, as their share of a quarter of wheat, the price of ninety-six quartern loaves. The quarter of wheat was allowed to make one hundred and four quartern loaves. The price of eight loaves, together with the offal, was allowed to miller and baker for their expenses and profit. Now, ninety-six quartern loaves, at 9½d. each, amount to 76s. Therefore, according to the old mode of reckoning, the farmer ought to get 76s. at this time for his quarter of wheat; and he does get only

45s. 11d. People cry out; and a very ignorant writer in the County Herald, says that the farmer gets now only about fifty-five quartern loaves, "leaving the value of fifty-four to the rapacity of traders and corn-dealers." What rapacity? What vain and silly abuse is this? Corn-dealers and traders, if they profited so very largely from their business, would soon have plenty of others to share in it. Oh! no; This is miserable nonsense. It is all the taxes and all the rates that the traders and millers and bakers and all the persons before mentioned, have to pay; it is these that make the eaters of bread pay more to the manufacturers of it, and that cause the farmer to receive less in proportion.

I have now, I think, made this so clear, that it is impossible for any person, of common understanding, not to comprehend the cause of all those distresses which are harassing the country. Turn the matter which way you will; look at it in whatever direction; and the taxes still stare you in the face as the great and all-pervading cause of the distress. It appears to me the strangest thing in the world, that there

should be any longer a dispute upon the subject. I believe the conviction to be very general, that the taxes must be speedily greatly reduced, or that a convulsive revolution will be the consequence. This is my own firm persuasion. It remains with the Landlords, and with them wholly and solely to adopt the measures necessary to produce such reduction: if they fail to adopt those measures, I have nothing within my power left, but to offer my best wishes for such final settlement as shall secure the happiness of the Nation; and particularly that of those labouring classes, amongst whom I was born and bred, and to make common cause with whom, has always been, and always will be, the pride and the boast of,

Your Friend,

WM. COBBETT.

WAR.

THE TURKS AND RUSSIANS.

As it seems probable that a war between these despotisms will take place; and as it can hardly take place without producing some considerable practical effect upon ourselves, it may

be useful to offer such observations as occur to us, in this early stage of the event, without giving any pledge that circumstances may not arise to alter the opinions founded on the present imperfect view of the matter.

It would be waste of time to pretend to enter into the grounds of the quarrel, and a still greater waste of time, to affect to be able to penetrate all the ultimate views of the parties, or to describe the numerous tricks and intrigues that have been carried on by the bribery and corruption of courtiers and of harlots of quality. To say that the Germans or Russians have had a hand in the thing is enough to make us know that no tongue or pen can give an adequate description of the perfidy and profligacy that have been at work; while, there can be very little doubt, that, in this respect, the Turks are a dead match for the Germans and Russians.

Leaving all these, therefore, to occupy the minds of such as delight in dabbling in the filth and villany of the European Courts, let us take a view of the dispute, and of its probable consequences, in their bearings upon us. Stripped of all the flummery, hypocrisy and pomposity of State papers, the Autocrat of Russia has quar-

relled with the Turk, because the Turk has adopted some very severe and very ferocious measures towards his subjects of *Greece*, who are Christians of the Grecian church, to which church it pleases the Russian to belong. In what degree the treatment of the Greeks by the Turks, differs from the treatment of a weaker *sister kingdom* by a stronger sister kingdom, which might be named, it may not be so very easy to ascertain, seeing that no precise intelligence appears to have reached this country, as to the particular number of hours, that the Turks suffer the Greeks to be out of their houses, without being liable to be transported for the offence. We have heard of great cruelties practised by the Turks upon the *Catholics* of Greece, and we must abominate the conduct of the Turks; but it is by no means certain that the King of the Cossacks has the most pure objects in view, in his quarrel with these same Turks. In short, that man must be pretty much of a fool who can be made to believe, that it is a love of justice, of humanity, and, above all things, a love of *freedom*, which has put, or is putting, the armies of Russia in movement; such a man must have totally forgotten *Poland*,

and, indeed, have forgotten every war in which Russia has ever been engaged.

The parties to this war, then, are, in point of *morality*, and in point of state policy also, perfectly upon a level. And, therefore, the only question with an Englishman is, or ought to be, the *success of which of them is likely to be least injurious to England!* And, there can be no doubt, in the mind of any man that reflects, that England ought to wish for the success of *the Turk*. Let no one attempt to persuade us that *religion* has any thing to do with the matter. If it had, the Turk's religion has nothing in it more essentially hostile to ours, than has the religion of the Autocrat. Our Church *protests* against the religion of the Autocrat, and calls it *damnable*; and though the religion of the Turk may be very bad, it certainly cannot be *worse than damnable!* Let us cast this consideration aside, therefore; let us get rid of this means of delusion; and look at the thing in its true light; namely, as a thing that may affect our immediate interests, and our permanent interests and power; bearing in mind, that no nation has ever been fool enough not to pursue these objects, though to be secured by the

amity or assistance of those whom it calls *infidels*. The Americans are an extremely *pious* people; but when Mr. JEFFERSON (then President of the United States) found that the interest of his country required a treaty of *amity* with the *Dey of Algiers*, he had no scruple to declare, "that there was no thing in the Constitution of the United States *hostile to the Mahomedan religion*." To be sure, *Republicans*, like the puritans in *Hudibras*, are allowed greater liberties of conscience than other people; but if Mr. JEFFERSON could go this length, and with the approbation of so pious a people, we are, surely, not to be bound to our ruin, or, at least, to our great injury by an over-scrupulousness with regard to this same matter of religion.

Leaving religion then, out of the question, we shall find, it is firmly believed by all men of common sense, that the objects of the Autocrat are these; namely, to invade a part of the Turk's dominions: to conquer and to hold those dominions; to get and keep possession of several commodious sea-ports in the eastern part of the Mediterranean; to keep up stout fleets in that part of the world; to be able to make a formidable opposition to Eng-

land in that quarter; and, in conjunction with the Americans, in case of war with England, to master the English in the Mediterranean sea. This is the plain view of the matter; and, we may be well assured, that religion and the deliverance of the Greeks have no more to do with the matter, than religion and the deliverance of the French had to do with the movements of the Holy Alliance.

What Englishman cares any thing about the Turk? But, the Turk, at present, prevents the Autocrat from effecting the objects just mentioned; and, therefore, common sense tells us that England ought to be for the Turk. It is our business to preserve our power; and not to sink down into a little pitiful insignificant State. Our great Statesmen have been so busy in building barracks at home, and in fixing the number of square inches of paper to be contained in a sixpenny pamphlet, that they have not had time to bestow on thinking about the constantly growing friendship and constantly strengthening ties *between the Autocrat and the American Congress!* They are the dearest friends in the world; nothing is neglected that can tend to further their conjoint interests. There is a large and most formi-

dable fleet growing up on the other side of the Atlantic. At present there is little point of contact between that and the force of the Autocrat; but, let him have ports in the Mediterranean; and, in case of another war, those rights, those *maritime rights*, without which England must be defeated in any war with France, Spain and Holland, or either of them; those maritime rights, pass away from England for ever, and she must cease to be what she has been for so many ages.

Thus, then, my Lord HOLLAND might be wrong, though no one will doubt of his having meant well and honestly, when he said, the other day, that he *wished the Turks to be overthrown*, and that he did not care *how*, or by *whom*. It was honest indignation, bursting from the humane heart of his Lordship; but, we must consider what our own permanent safety demands. Here are two despots, and if they were two devils, necessity compels us to take part with that whose defence is necessary to our own permanent security.

What our Ministers intend to do, it would be hard to say. What they *ought* to do, is clear enough; and that is to send as many ships of the line as they

can muster, to carry a message to the Autocrat, requesting him, in very civil language, to march his Cossacks back from the confines of the dominions of the Turk, and, in case of non-compliance, to take, burn, sink or destroy, or batter down, all that they possibly could, belonging to the Autocrat. A devil of a fuss would this make amongst the Bears of Petersburg, and amongst the *Bulls* of London. But what is a fainting fit, or fit of the gripes, to *Rothschild*, when compared with the object at stake! Sure enough, *PEEL's* Bill must be *instantly repealed*, or three-fourths of the National Debt swept away; but, then, we come, as first or last we must come, to the question: are these funds to be supported; is this millstone to drag England down for ever; *or is it to be shaken off*.

We find in the history of all nations, periods of rise and periods of decline; and if we examine strictly into the matter, we shall find, that these depend, not upon times and seasons; not upon any accidents; not upon any tendency in the nature of things; but upon the minds of those who govern; and, unhappily for this nation, the minds of those who have been governing for many years past

have been, what may properly be called, minds of *shifts* and *expedients*. I shall be told, that these minds brought the country to a great pitch of *glory*, in evidence of which, the close of the last war will be cited. But, how was that thing miscalled glory obtained? Not by such measures as a great mind could have endured for a moment. It was obtained by a trickery of paper-money; by a series of shifts and expedients of the lowest, most vulgar, most mean and most scandalous description; and, when the Bank Directors were treated with contumely, at the time of passing Peel's Bill, they answered truly and pertinently, that to *them*; that to *the Bank*, was due the *success of the war*! They put in their claim to the *glory*; and to them and the Stock-Jobbers and Loan-Jobbers it was due. The result has shown of what nature that glory was. It was glory that has produced distress, ruin, misery, degradation to all that was industrious and all that was solid, and all that was held in estimation in former times. And now, at this moment, and as applicable to the case before us, what is the effect of this glory, won by a series of shifts and expedients? why, to compel this nation to stand tamely and look

on while the Autocrat of Russia is marching to strike one of the greatest blows that ever was stricken at our permanent interest and power.

Those who have called themselves Statesmen in England, for the last thirty or forty years, have had but one object that they have kept steadily in view; namely, *that of preventing the people from being fairly represented in Parliament*. This has been the pivot on which all their measures, abroad as well as at home, have constantly turned. All their wars on the Continent of Europe; their prolonging of those wars; their recent war against the United States of America, in the hope of over-setting the Government of that Country; their alliances on the Continent; their aggrandisement of the Autocrat and the Austrian; their recent conduct with regard to Naples; and their flagrant and self-destructive conduct towards the South Americans. The question with them, has constantly been, not whether they were providing for the permanent power of the Country, but whether they were doing that which would check the cause of Reform in England. Their exultation, their triumph, at the close of the war on the Continent, was not over

France; not over Napoleon, even; but it was valuable in their eyes, because they deemed it a triumph over the Reformers of England, to whose hopes they regarded it as a death blow.

It was this spirit; this miserable, this pitiful, this unnatural and spiteful spirit, by which they were animated, in a peculiar degree, in their conduct towards the *South Americans*. It was so manifestly the interest of England, to act a friendly part at least, towards those Provinces, that there is no accounting for the conduct of the English Government, upon any other ground than that of its fear to set an example that would be encouraging to the Reformers in England. To be sure, the wisest of mankind have not been selected to be our Ministers and Consuls in the United States; but one would have thought, that common newspaper reading would have told our Ministers, that a war seven years from this time will see upon the ocean fifty American ships of the line; and such ships too, as never were seen upon that ocean before; was it not worth while, to pay a little attention to this beforehand; and to think about the means of providing an enemy sufficient to cope with this force or with a part of

it? There, in *Mexico* and in *Venezuela*; there were the enemies already provided. There were allies for us; and allies sufficiently dependant, too. Yet, these were left to shift for themselves; to be re-inslaved; to get their independence if they could; and at any rate, not to have England to thank for it. Not to have any obligation to her; not to be bound to her by any tie. Nay, our Ministers availed themselves, eagerly availed themselves, of the *example of the American Congress*, to do all they possibly could to prevent the establishment of that independence! Of all the acts of the English Ministry and Parliament, even during the last thirty years of unparalleled conduct, no act has been equal to this in flagrant impolicy.

Just as if that which was good for the United States, could in a case like this, possibly be good for England. The Congress knew very well, that their interest, their permanent tranquillity and security, their power and consequence amongst nations, required that the independence of South America should be prevented, and if not prevented, retarded as much as possible. The Congress, therefore, setting at defiance, not only all their pro-

fessed love of liberty and humanity, not only all the principles on which they themselves had revolted and built their independence, not only the maxims laid down even in their own written Constitution, but, in addition to all these, every principle of public law, so long recognised amongst Nations, and against the violation of which in others they had made so many and such bitter complaints; the Congress, setting all these at open defiance, and contrary to the disposition of the people of America, too, actually, though artfully, sided with the despot of Spain against his oppressed and revolted subjects. And, hear it posterity! The English Government did the same thing, *because the Congress had done it!* This was the pretence; but the true reason was, that, to have taken part with the revolted Spaniards would have been to give encouragement to the Reformers in England!

It is impossible to look at the map of the two Americas, and to know any thing at all of the population and the resources of the two, without seeing, as clearly as I see this paper before me, that it was the duty of the English Ministers, in 1817, not to lose a moment in forming an alliance,

strict, and if possible indissoluble, with Mexico and Venezuela. There were two States, completely commanding the Gulf of Mexico; an everlasting watch upon those States; and absolutely holding the key of the only possible entrance and outlet of the most fertile of those States. Rivals of the United States in the products the most valuable in the latter, Cotton, Rice, Tobacco, and even Corn. Abounding in woods, fully equal in value to those of the best parts of the United States, in short, capable, in alliance with England, of completely eclipsing those States in the space of a quarter of a Century; and affording, in the meanwhile, and even immediately, complete security, against every hostile movement of the United States, and being constantly a bridle in their mouths.

Yet, no thought was taken of this. The Ministry were employed at that time in getting Dungeon and Gagging Bills passed; in dictating Sidmouth's Circulars; and in congratulating the Houses of Parliament upon the success of the measures, which, in their wisdom, they had adopted for keeping in check, not the United States of America, but the twopenny pamphlets, and Mr. Preston the cobbler and Spencean of England!

Thus it has been, however, and thus I fear it will be to the end of the chapter; and the only comfort is, that there is every reason to believe, that the remainder of the chapter cannot now be very long.

Let no man say of me, that I talk thus of the United States *here in England*; and that I held a different language when in those States. I held the same language there that I hold here. I remonstrated with our own Government, in 1817, in print, while I was in that country; and I not only did it in print, but I sent the printed remonstrance to Washington, where the Congress was sitting, while I myself was in Long Island. And I did it expressly upon this ground, that though I owed obedience to the laws there, I still owed allegiance and duty to my own country. My language with regard to the misconduct of the Congress; to its want of feeling and want of justice towards the South Americans, was much stronger, much, less measured then than it has been now. I reprobated that conduct in the most unqualified terms; and I must do the Congress the justice to say, that there were men found in that body, men that I never knew and never

had heard of before, to stand up, to quote my words, to name me, and to say, "this is very severe, to be sure, but what he says is true." And ashamed I am to add, that I have never witnessed like courage and like candour in an *English assembly*! Nor shall I ever witness it till there be an assembly in England of a very different description from any that I have ever yet seen in it.

In this conduct of the Congress, viewed in the right light; I mean in their conduct towards the South Americans, there was a very good example for our Ministers to follow; that is to say, the example of men, who at all hazards, at all events, *pursued the interests of their country*. Our gentlemen were thinking about how the cause of freedom in South America might affect the cause of reform in England! They were for making their foreign measures square with their domestic restraints upon the liberties of the people. They had their eye constantly on the *Boroughs*, and only saw South America now and then by a sort of side glance. The Congress on the contrary, left their well-established liberty at home to take care of itself, and bent all their endeavours to prevent the

permanent interests and power of their country from receiving a blow from without. Such is the difference between little minds and great minds. Such is the difference between boroughmongering and no boroughmongering.

To return for a moment to the affair of the Turk and the Autocrat, 'Change Alley and the Boroughs will here again, I dare say, eclipse the object that ought to be in view. Some shift, some expedient; some slurring over of the thing, will, most likely, take place. And, thus, in all human probability, we shall shuffle along, till the Nation shall feel, and be ashamed of, its degraded state, and, in some convulsive moment, shall shake off the millstone and snap all the trammels asunder.

TO MR. CARLILE.

Kensington, 11 April 1822.

SIR,

IN your "*Republican*" of the 1st of last Month, at page 283, you seem to imagine, that my writing from America "*denouncing* men who were advocating "*Republican government*, and "*threatening* how soon I would "*write them down* when I came "*home*;" you seem to imagine, that this arose from some state-

ment, or request, sent out to me from England. As this suspicion may induce you to feel ill-will towards the persons suspected, I think it right to give you this solemn assurance, that I was, in what I said, in this case, not actuated by any such motive, and that I never received any such statement or request from any person whatever.

Give me leave to add, that what you call a *denunciation* was no denunciation at all. That it was merely an expression of *regret*; and that I uttered no *threat* about *writing down*. But, I must, at the same time say, that I could, at once *write you down* upon this subject; because I believe you to be a right honest man, and I am convinced, that a plain statement of indubitable facts, such as I could make, would make you *pull down your republican sign* with your own hands. I do not, at present, choose to make this statement. I do not think it wise to do it just now. I do not know that it may ever be necessary to do so. At any rate, I have *seen* the thing, in all its shapes, and you have not. And, as we perfectly agree as to the matter called *Boroughmongering*, which is England's real Devil, let us dispose of that first.

I cannot conclude my Letter without telling you, that it is impossible for my pen or tongue to describe a thousandth part of what I feel in reading your account of the treatment that you, Mrs. Carlile and your Sister have received and are receiving in Dorchester Goal; and I am equally unable to describe my admiration of the courage and fortitude of all the three. I dispute with no man

about religion ; I object not to the King's brother going to dine in public with the *Jews*, who are *professed blasphemers* ; and, of course, I quarrel not with your opinions, though I think them as erroneous, and not *more* than those of the Unitarians, and though I wish, for your sake, that you would leave them to work their own way, or not, as it might happen. But, with regard to your *treatment*, from first to last, and especially that of Mrs. Carlile and your Sister ; with regard to that horrible treatment, as described in the Republican of the 1st of March, it is my cause and every man's cause ; and, I do most solemnly assure you, that, if I did not hope, and confidently hope, *to see the day that shall give you ample justice*, I should think myself covered with infamy by living in England an hour beyond the time that would enable me to escape from her degraded shores.

The simple statement that you have given fills the heart with indignation and rage. Talk of "*distress*" after this ! Talk of *suffering* farmers and their *suffering* families ! Talk of *their* alarms from fire by night, and their dread of distrains by day : let them look at your paper of the 1st of March, and they will *hug* themselves in the thought of the comparative blessings they enjoy even while the stacks are blazing in their yards !

With a hearty detestation of all your persecutors, and with a sincere desire that you will live to triumph over them, I remain,

Sir,

Your most obedient and
Most humble Servant,

WM. COBBETT.

N. B. I recommend to every man, who has any pretensions to *mercifulness*, to read Mr. CARLILE'S paper of the 1st of March, as far as that paper relates to the treatment of himself, his wife and sister in Dorchester gaol. I have never, since I first learned to read, read any thing so horrible as this. And, this is *in England* ! The *landlords* should read this. And when they have read it, they ought to sit down quietly, and consider how this may *eventually* affect *them* ! For, they never can suppose, that this is to be *forgotten*. They never can suppose *that*. However, in thus giving them my opinions and advice, in as plain language as I *dare*, I discharge my duty : I wash my hands of the consequences. One thing, however, I will here again repeat ; and that is, that, as far as I may have any influence in producing, or retarding, events in England, that influence shall always have for its *first* object, the obtaining of *justice* for those who have suffered in the way that Mr. Carlile has suffered and is still suffering.

THE NEXT REGISTER

WILL contain a Letter to Mr. WESTERN on his proposed motion for the *repeal of Peel's Bill*.